

## Introduction

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide an update on the progress of the new plan for Stafford Borough in 2011 and to set out next steps.

## Draft Publication Consultation

We have just finished consulting on 'The Plan for Stafford Borough - Draft Publication'. The document set out the development strategy and planning policies for the next 20 years. Thank you to all those who took the time to attend the exhibitions and to make comments. Overall we received over 1000 comments with over 600 people attending our drop in session exhibitions across Stafford town and in Stone.

### Overall the main comments received during the exhibitions included:

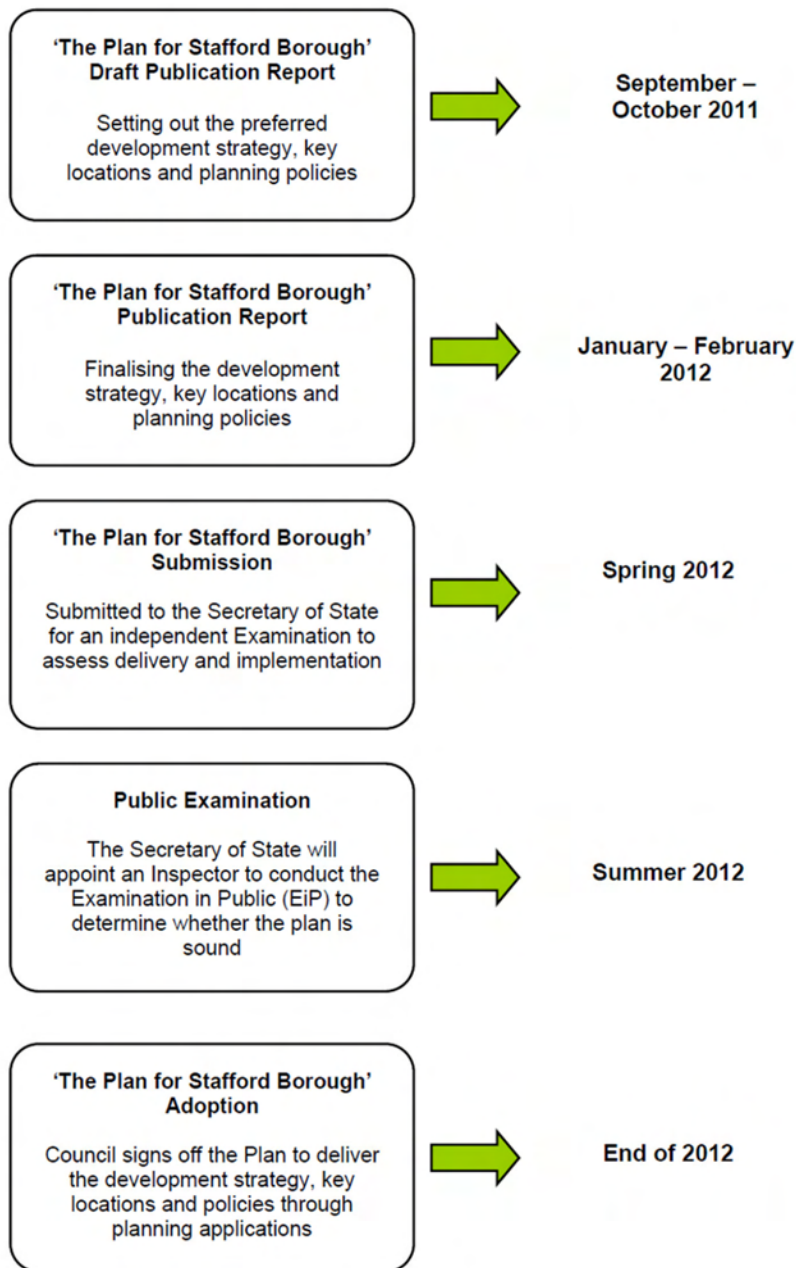
- Concerns over road infrastructure and its ability to accommodate increased traffic from new development
- Development must be accompanied by increases in services for the local community such as health centres, local shops, community hall, recreation facilities and additional schools provision
- New developments should accommodate a range of different age groups as well as mix of households, particularly affordable housing for young people. Housing should also be well designed and incorporate energy efficient technology
- Priority should be given to increasing the amount of open space with easy access to the open countryside as well as providing areas for wildlife
- Provision should be made for better public transport as well as cycle and pedestrian routes

We will be producing a consultation report shortly setting out more detailed comments received. We would also like to hear from you regarding the consultation process - did you attend the exhibition? Did you respond to the consultation? If yes please fill in our short survey at <http://staffordbc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/> to help us improve on future consultations.



## Next Steps

All responses received to the Draft Publication will be presented to Members in late 2011. Following this a Publication document will be prepared for further consultation in 2012. Work on the Site Specific Policy DPD will commence after The Plan for Stafford Borough has been adopted. Work on topic based SPD's will continue in 2012. Below is the timetable for The new plan.



## Masterplanning

In the New Year there will be a masterplanning exercise covering land to the west of Stafford. This will be an opportunity for you to help design the site and have your say about what is needed for the existing and new community.

Masterplanning is working out how best to lay out building blocks, transport infrastructure, public realm and the many other things that make up an urban environment. It provides the framework within which architects will later develop specific buildings.



## The Plan for Stafford Borough

The Local Development Framework, known as The Plan for Stafford Borough, will replace saved policies in The Stafford Borough Local Plan (1998) to deliver the new spatial strategy to 2031.

The following document has already been produced:-

- Statement of Community Involvement (adopted 2006) – deals specifically with how stakeholders and communities can make a contribution in the preparation of planning documents and in determining planning applications.

The following consultations took place between 2009 and 2010:

- **The Plan for Stafford Borough - Issues and Options: February - April 2009.** This document looked at options for development around Stafford, Stone and larger rural settlements
- **The Plan for Stafford Borough - Draft Core Policies: February - April 2010.** This document set out the draft core policies which will be used to assess planning applications in the future
- **The Plan for Stafford Borough - Local Choices: November 2010 - January 2011.** This document set out the broad approach following the revocation of the West Midlands RSS and changes to national planning policy

## E-consultation system

Stafford Borough Council's Forward Planning team have a consultation portal to help you provide your views on-line. When you register you will create your own account where you can tell us what topic areas you're interested in, update your personal details without the need to write or call us, manage your own comments, save drafts, check the status of your comments and view the comments made by others the moment they've been processed by the Council.

You can register or log in to change your details at <http://staffordbc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/> to receive updates on Stafford Borough's Local Development Framework progress.

### Save paper and time!

There is no need for you to send us your comments in the post once you have made them on-line. You can amend your account settings so you will receive an e-mail confirming receipt of your comments and then again when your comments have been processed by the Council.

## Evidence Documents

The following background documents can be accessed at

<http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/gathering-evidence>

### Housing

- [The Housing Monitor: Land for New Homes](#)
- [North Housing Market Area Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment](#)
- [Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment \(SHLAA\)](#)
- [Housing Market Areas Assessment](#)
- [5 Year Housing Land Supply Statement](#) (updated May 2011)
- [Affordable Housing Viability Study](#), including [results](#) and [appendices](#)

### Employment and the Economy

- [Employment Land Review](#)
- [National Land Use Database](#) (Homes and Communities Agency website)

### Retail/Town Centres

- [Town Centre Capacity Assessment \(Retail, Office and Leisure\)](#) and [appendices](#)
- [Stafford Town Centre Study 2000](#)

### Community

- [Settlement Assessment of Services and Facilities](#)
- [Key Stakeholder Discussions: Parish Meetings](#)

### Transport

- [Local Transport Plan 2011 - 2015](#)

## Climate Change

- [The Strategic flood-risk assessment \(SFRA\) Prepared jointly alongside Lichfield District Council, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and Tamworth Borough Council](#)
- [Water Cycle Study and Surface Water Management Plan](#)
- [Renewable Energy Study](#)

## Tourism, leisure & recreation

- [Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 \(PPG17\) 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation' Assessment](#)

## Environment & landscape

- [Green Infrastructure Strategy](#)
- [Landscape and Countryside Character Assessment](#)
- [Habitats Regulations Assessment \(Appropriate Assessment\)](#)
- [Stafford Borough Local Development Framework Ecological Desk Study 2008](#)
- [Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan](#)
- [Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan](#) (updated early 2011)

## Historic Environment

- [Historic Environment Character Assessment for Stafford Town \(April 2009\)](#)
- [Historic Environment Character Assessment for Stone \(July 2009\)](#)
- [Historic Environment Character Assessment for Haywoods \(July 2009\)](#)
- [Historic Environment Character Assessment for Eccleshall \(August 2009\)](#)
- [Historic Environment Character Assessment for Gnosall \(August 2009\)](#)
- [Stafford Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal](#)
- [Stone Conservation Area Appraisal](#)

## Infrastructure

- [Stafford Borough Infrastructure Strategy: Stage 1 Final Report \(July 2009\)](#)
- [Key Stakeholder Discussions: Statutory Agencies & Utilities](#)
- [Water Cycle Study and Surface Water Management Plan](#)

## Other

- [Annual Monitoring Report](#)
- [Census Information](#) - Local information from the 2001 Census

## Background

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (and subsequent amendments) introduced major changes to how we plan for the future of Stafford Borough. It replaced the old system, which included the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan and the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001, with a new 'two-tiered' plan system made up of the Regional Spatial Strategy and the Local Development Framework.

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On the 6 July 2010 the Regional Spatial Strategy was revoked by the Secretary of State and is due to be removed from the planning policy framework by Government legislation during in 2011.

Currently, the saved policies from the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001, the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Structure Plan and national planning guidance are used to assess planning applications. The following Supplementary Planning Guidance are also used as material consideration:

- New and Old Shopfronts - Good for Business Boroughwide (Adopted May 2000)
- Space About Dwellings - Supplement to Local Plan (Adopted October 1998)
- Extensions to Dwellings - Supplement to Local Plan (Adopted October 1998)

### Localism Bill

The Localism Bill is now being discussed in Parliament. When enacted, it will devolve greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods and give local communities more control over housing and planning decisions.

The Bill is part of the Government's plans for the 'Big Society' and includes changes to the current planning system. The Bill will fulfil the Government's intention to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS), replace national planning policy statements with the national planning policy framework and introduce neighbourhood planning, through the production of neighbourhood development plans and the use of neighbourhood development orders. More information on the Localism Bill can be found on the Department of Communities and Local Government website at [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk). This includes access to the full Localism Bill presented to Parliament and a Plain English guide to the Bill.

### National Planning Policy Framework

Current planning policy for planning and the environment is set out in Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG). The government is committed to publishing a simple and consolidated national planning policy framework. The framework will cover all forms of development and set out national, economic and social priorities. It will replace all the PPS and PPGs. Consultation on the draft NPPF ended on 17th October 2011. Further information can be found on the Communities website at [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk).

### Neighbourhood Planning

The Government is encouraging communities to get involved in shaping the character of the neighbourhood in which they live. The Localism Bill will hand planning powers to communities. This is known as the neighbourhood planning system. Parish councils will be able to draw up plans in close consultation with communities.

In brief:

- The Plan for Stafford Borough will outline how much development, such as housing and employment is to be built, where it will be built and timings in relation to infrastructure improvements.
- Neighbourhood Plans will concentrate on identifying smaller sites for development, community use and public open space, the type of housing that should be built; and the general principles of design in new developments.

If you would like more information on Neighbourhood Planning please contact Forward Planning.

## Further Information

If you have any questions on any of the items in this newsletter please contact the Forward Planning Team on 01785 619000 or by email [forwardplanning@staffordbc.gov.uk](mailto:forwardplanning@staffordbc.gov.uk). Information regarding The Plan for Stafford Borough can be found online at [www.staffordbc.gov.uk/forwardplanning](http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/forwardplanning)

## Glossary

The table below gives an explanation to the abbreviations commonly used in relation to planning policy.

AMR	Annual Monitoring Report: annual report which assesses the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which policies in Local Development Documents are being successfully implemented.
AAP	Area Action Plans: provide a planning framework for areas of change and areas of conservation.
COI	Core Output Indicators: a set of indicators specified centrally against which performance against policies can be measured.  They provide consistent data across local authorities which feed into regional monitoring arrangements and allow comparisons between authorities.
DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government - Central Government Department
DPD	Development Plan Document: are spatial planning documents prepared by the Borough Council. These are subject to independent examination and there is a right for those making representations to be heard at the independent examination. DPD's are The Plan for Stafford Borough, Development Management and Site-Specific Allocations and Policies.
LDF	Local Development Framework: the name for the portfolio of Local Development Documents. It consists of Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents, a Statement of Community Involvement, the Local Development Scheme and Annual Monitoring Reports. Taken together these documents provide the framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for Stafford Borough
LDS	Local Development Scheme: sets out a timetable for the production of individual Development Plan Document's.
SA	Sustainability Appraisal: An appraisal of the impacts of policies and proposals on economic, social and environmental issues
'Saved' policies	'Saved' policies: Transitional arrangements allowing for existing adopted plans and policies to be saved beyond September 2007 (and longer by direction of the Secretary of State). A list of current saved policies can be found at in the Local Development Scheme (2010) or accessed at <a href="http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/revised-local-development-scheme-lds-2008">http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/revised-local-development-scheme-lds-2008</a>

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SCI	Statement of Community Involvement: sets out the standards which the Council intend to achieve and how in relation to involving the community in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all Local Development Documents and in significant development control decisions. A consultation statement showing how the authority has complied with its Statement of Community Involvement will be required for all Local Development Documents.
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment: An assessment of the potential impacts of policies and proposals on the environment, to include proposals for the mitigation of impacts.
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment: A study of the potential of housing development areas within the Borough.
'Soundness'	Government Tests of Soundness: To be sound a Development Plan Document should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Justified – i.e. founded on a robust and credible evidence base and is the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives;</li> <li>• Effective – i.e. deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored;</li> <li>• Consistent with national policy.</li> </ul>
SPD	Supplementary Planning Documents: will cover a wide range of issues on which the Council wish to issue supplementary guidance in respect of the policies and proposals in Development Plan Documents. They will not form part of the Development Plan nor be subject to independent examination.